



During humanitarian crises vulnerable groups are hit the hardest. That includes persons with disabilities. According to the recent World Report on Disability, 15% of the population worldwide live with a disability, 80% of those in developing countries. In cases of emergencies persons with disabilities are at a higher risk of not accessing humanitarian aid. Disasters cause major environment changes such as damaged infrastructure and disrupted social networks that can

be particularly detrimental to persons with disabilities. Without proactive measures by intervening organisations, inclusion fails to take place and the risk to the lives of persons with disabilities increases.

Persons with disabilities have the same basic needs as all other individuals in the community. As access to such basic services is often a greater challenge for persons with disabilities, humanitarian actions must be made inclusive!

INCLUSION IS A HUMAN RIGHT!

The international community has repeatedly underlined the necessity to include persons with disabilities in humanitarian action. With the UN Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights and Dignity of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD), inclusion is no longer a mere desirable and ideal situation, but a requirement of international law.

“States Parties shall take, in accordance with their obligations under international law, including international humanitarian law and international human rights law, all necessary measures to ensure the protection and safety of persons with disabilities in situations of risk, including situations of armed conflict, humanitarian emergencies and the occurrence of natural disasters.”

UNCRPD, Article 11

CHERYLL'S STORY

Cheryll is a young woman who is blind, and is the mother of three children. Cheryll's family lost their home during the typhoon which struck the Philippines in November 2013. Using damaged material they have rebuilt a small shelter. Cheryll is very insecure and wants her husband to stay with her all the time. She says, “Because I cannot see anything and don't know the new shelter, I hit my head a lot. In the old house I knew where everything was; now I don't anymore.” Cheryll is a young mother with disability who was able to take care of her family and also to work. However, because the physical environment has drastically changed, including her own house, she feels afraid for herself and her children.

There is a need to ensure that Cheryll recovers her level of autonomy so that she can support her family. Cheryll's family should be prioritised for a new shelter in a safe environment. Special attention should be given to clearing the pathway of obstacles and also to making sure that she can access hygiene facilities without support. Once Cheryll feels safe again, her husband can go back to work.

Cheryll (30) and Aldrine (29) with their children, in front of what used to be their home.

Philippines after typhoon Haiyan, November 2013



MINIMUM STANDARDS OF INCLUSION IN HUMANITARIAN INTERVENTIONS

1. COORDINATION AND COLLABORATION:

Local and national disabled people's organisations as well as specialised international aid agencies need to coordinate their efforts to ensure that disability is included in their projects as a core-crosscutting theme.

2. NON-DISCRIMINATION:

All policies in emergencies and conflict prevention/mitigation require a proactive approach aiming at identifying and removing exclusion factors, which prevent persons with disabilities from accessing relief services and programs on peace and conflict mitigation.

3. ENSURE PARTICIPATION OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES:

Persons with disabilities must be recognized as key experts for inclusion and be consulted in programming and decision-making of humanitarian interventions.

4. UNIVERSAL ACCESSIBILITY:

Ensure that persons with disabilities have access to all relevant information by preparing key messages in multiple and accessible formats.

STEPS TOWARDS INCLUSIVE HUMANITARIAN AID



1. All in from the start.

Include the needs of persons with disabilities in rescue plans, early warning systems and communications.



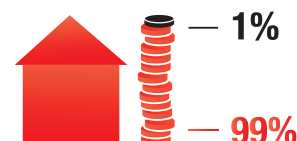
2. Leave no-one behind.

Ensure accessibility of all relief services.



3. Build back better.

Ensure barrier-free reconstruction of physical infrastructures.



Extra costs of making accessible buildings can be as low as 0,5% – 1% of the total costs of a project.

For more information, visit our website: www.endexclusion.eu



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